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A STUDY OF THE MATURE WOMEN STUDENTS ATTENDING DAY CLASSES AT RIVERSIDE CITY COLLEGE DURING THE SPRING SEMESTER, 1964.

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THIS STUDY DEFINED A MATURE WOMAN AS BEING 25 YEARS OLD OR OLDER OR MARRIED. DATA WERE COLLECTED ON 225 MATURE WOMEN ATTENDING RIVERSIDE CITY COLLEGE DURING THE 1964 SPRING SEMESTER, INCLUDING DATE OF BIRTH, MARITAL STATUS, ACADEMIC SUCCESS, TEST SCORES, GRADE POINT AVERAGE, UNITS OF STUDY, MAJOR, AND SCHOOLS OF TRANSFER. A QUESTIONNAIRE WAS SENT TO A RANDOM SAMPLE OF THIS GROUP. THE RESPONSES INDICATE THAT THE BASIC PROBLEM ENCOUNTERED BY THESE WOMEN WAS LACK OF TIME FOR BOTH HOME DUTIES AND STUDY. THEIR GRADE POINT AVERAGE WAS 0.5 HIGHER THAN THAT OF THE TOTAL STUDENT BODY, AND MOST INDICATED NO FINANCIAL PROBLEM. MORE CLASSES FROM 10 AM TO 2 PM, MORE 1 1/2-HOUR CLASSES, AND A SCHOOL NURSERY WOULD ALLEVIATE MANY OF THE TIME PROBLEMS. (HS)

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A Study of the Mature Women students attending Day Classes at Riverside City College during the spring semester, 1964.

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Riverside City College

October, 1964

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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JC 660 495

I. Introduction

The Problem

It is the purpose of this study:

1. To determine the characteristics of the mature women students on the Riverside City College campus during the spring semester, 1964.
2. To gather information concerning the adjustment of these women to college and to Riverside City College in particular.
3. To discover problems, if any, that pertain to mature women attending this community college.
4. To recommend, if such recommendation is warranted, any special considerations needed by mature women on the Riverside City College campus.

Mature Woman Defined

For the purpose of this study, the mature woman is defined as the woman who is 25 years or older or married. This definition was chosen to correspond to the requirements for membership in Lambda Nu, the sorority established on our campus in 1961 for the purpose of providing a common meeting ground for the older adult woman student, as well as an opportunity to become better acquainted with other students of like position, and provide an avenue through which these students may take an integrated part in the activities of the campus.

II. The Method

The procedure used in the study follows:

1. An IBM numerical listing by student number was made in our Data Processing Laboratory of all mature women attending Riverside City College during the spring semester, 1964. This listing contained the following information: name, student number, date of birth, marital status, high school attended, academic status, test scores, units enrolled in, units completed, grade point average (Fall, 1963), listed major, and listed schools of transfer. Tabulations were compiled into a summary. (See appendix A.)

2. A questionnaire incorporating suggestions from the Counseling Staff and from Mrs. Mary Wallace, Dean of Students, was then prepared and sent along with a cover letter to a random sampling of the mature women enrolled. (See appendix B) Beginning with the second name on the IBM list (determined by the flip of a coin) every third student received the questionnaire. A tabulation of the results of the questionnaire was prepared in summary form. (See appendix D).

III. Summary of Findings

A. Characteristics

From the information compiled through data processing, it is apparent that the mature women attending day classes during the spring semester, 1964, were married women (96%) between the ages of 25 and 45 with the largest number falling into the 25-35 age group. Although they were predominately high school graduates, the majority came from high schools outside Riverside or out-of-state. 22% were not high school graduates.

While half of these women were returning students, 73% were classified in freshman status (signifying less than 30 units completed.) 10.8 was the average number of units carried.

Of the 225 tested, approximately 70% had qualified for the transfer courses on the basis of the A.C.E. test. The grade point average of those women who had been enrolled in the fall semester of 1963 was 2.56, about .5 higher than the grade point average of the total student body. Those women on probationary academic status were thus classified because of incomplete records rather than poor college work.

By far the largest number of women who listed schools of transfer were planning to go to U.C.R. (64%) with those undecided and the California State Colleges at Fullerton, Los Angeles, San Diego and La Sierra College next in order of preference.

Of the 42 listed majors, those accounting for 72% of the students were: 2 year professional nursing, major undecided, cosmetology, elementary teaching, English, sociology or social work, psychology, Licensed Vocational Nursing, and 4 year B.S. in nursing.

B. Summary of the Questionnaire Results

Questionnaires sent: 96 Returned: 52 (54%)

The sampling was rather well distributed according to age, with the largest number of returns coming from the 26-35 age group. It was predominately a married group of women also with just twenty percent separated, divorced, or widowed. No single women were represented in the sample. Twelve percent were in their first semester at the college; the remaining eighty-eight percent had attended from one to ten semesters.

Families

112 children were represented ranging in age from less than one year to over 25 years. Though these women had none to six children, the majority (73%) had from one to three. About half of the student sampling had babysitters or relations caring for their samll children; the other half had school age children or no problem. Only one woman indicated that she had not yet been able to work out a satisfactory solution to the problem.

Families had favorable reactions to their mother's return to school (78%); another 15% replied that reactions were favorable as long as the household ran smoothly. Only three women indicated negative reactions from husbands but in these cases all three stated that the children approved.

Thirty-eight percent of these women had encountered no family problems as a result of their return to school; however, another fifty percent were concerned about the lack of time to be with their families and for household duties. The pressure of home duties coupled with study appeared to be more of a problem than learning how to study or college adjustment.

Financial Problems

The majority (70%) indicated no financial problems here at R.C.C. but 40% expected to rely on part-time work, scholarhsips or loans when they transferred to upper division. Half of the women expect to meet costs at the transfer school from family income as they are doing now.

Student Plans - Educational and Vocational

Approximately three-fourths of these women plan a two year education--58% for the A.A. degree; another 16% who plan to transfer without the A.A.; and 10% undecided. Almost half (46%) want the bachelor's degree with another 23% undecided. Plans to include the M.A. dropped sharply to 19% though 26% more were undecided at this point.

Approximately half of the women stated that they were attending college specifically to train for employment or a career; however 83% indicated that they planned to use their education in a vocation or career when they had finished their education.

College Problems

Finding enough time to study and the wise planning of their time were the concerns of more than 60% of the women. Competition with younger students or relationships with them, scheduling, or course requirements posed no problem for most of the women. Only one student regarded parking as a problem.

Satisfactions from College Experience

The stimulation of learning, expanded interests and outlook, personal satisfaction concerning ability to study again, and the gaining of self-confidence were the satisfactions named by 94% of the women.

Ways in Which the College Could Be of More Help

The need for additional counseling regarding aptitude, emotional problems, and vocations was cited by 21%. Other ways in which the college could help were listed as follows:

Pre-school nursery facilities (8%)
Club for married women (8%)
Additional Parking (5%)
Scheduling more 1½ hr. classes (5%)
Quiet place to study (5%)

Additional Comments

Of the 28 additional comments received, 24 were in appreciation of what the college had done for them. Three students indicated that instructor attitudes and comments were disturbing. And one student indicated that more counseling was needed for the older woman.

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. From the foregoing survey it is apparent that the basic problem encountered by the mature women enrolled in the spring of 1964 was that of time for both home duties and study. The suggested solution by some women that more classes be concentrated in shorter periods of time and more 1½ hour classes be scheduled might warrant further study. Recently Miss Ruth Osborn of George Washington University found that more classes concentrated between the hours of ten and two o'clock were needed to encourage mature women to return to college.[1]

[1]Thomas Henry Carroll, "Mature Women, Career Aspirations and the Colleges," Women's Education III: 1 (March, 1964) p. 7.

Perhaps also a credit course in Home Management offered at the college might be helpful to these women. Certainly more efficient methods of running their households would free them to spend more time with children and for study. Working women in the community might also be interested in such a course.

2. That one-fifth of the women studied feel the need of additional counseling might indicate to the Counseling Staff a need to take a closer look at how to encourage this group to seek the counseling they seem to want.

3. If the college should undertake a program of instruction in nursery school methods sometime in the future, perhaps some tie-in could be made here to give some assistance in child care to qualified women enrolled.

4. The need for financial help at the time of transfer would seem to be important enough to warrant the solicitation of additional scholarships for the mature woman. Women's service groups may be alerted to the need here.

5. Steps have been taken to re-activate Lambda Nu--a sorority founded in 1961 at R.C.C. for the mature woman. Though some time will be involved here, plans are to help these women feel a greater sense of belonging to the campus, but to keep meetings and organization structure to a minimum.

6. Perhaps in the planning of our new campus, a room somewhere could be dedicated to mature students--men and women--a place where they might feel free to gather between classes should they desire to do so. In the spring of 1964 there were 277 mature women enrolled; this fall there are 359. Assuming that this group will enlarge proportionately to the total women students as it has this past year, perhaps some special consideration needs to be given here.

7. This survey has shown that the mature women enrolled in the spring of 1964 were overwhelmingly appreciative of what the college was doing for them in the realm of personal satisfaction, intellectual stimulation, broader outlook, and vocational training. We should be extremely proud of this group of women. They are repaying the college by being good students.

APPENDIX A

RIVERSIDE CITY COLLEGE
Characteristics of Women Students 25 Years or Over or Married
Spring Semester, 1964

Total Number Enrolled: 277

Previously enrolled at RCC: 140
New this Semester: 137

Marital Status

Married: 257
Single: 20

Age

Under 25 years (married) 52
25-35: 106 (47%)
36-45: 84 (37%)
46 and over: 35 (16%)
Over 25 years 225

High School Attended

Riverside High Schools: 49 (18%)
Poly: 35
Ramona: 9
Rubidoux: 5
Other California High Schools: 88 (33%)
Out-of-state 122 (44%)
Out-of-Country 12 (4%)
None 6

High School Graduates: 217 (78%)
Non-high School Graduates: 60 (22%)

Academic Status

1. Clear from high school: 52
2. Probation from high school: 6
3. Transfer on probation: 0
4. Probation (incomplete records): 60
5. Non-high school graduate: 15
6. Single probation (returning R.C.C.): 11 (6 had 2.0 or better last semester)
7. Double probation (returning R.C.C.): 6
8. Clear - transfer student: 28
9. Clear - returning R.C.C. 96
None listed 3
277

Classification

Freshman - 201 (72.6 %)
Sophomore 62 (22.3 %)
A.A. degree earned 8 (2.9%)
B.A. degree earned 3 (1.1%)
none listed 3 (1.1%)
277

Number tested:	225
Qualified for transfer courses (A.C.E. - L Score 35 or above):	157 (69.8%)
Average number of units enrolled spring, 1964:	10.8
Average units completed:	31.8 (161 students)
Grade point average - Fall semester, 1963:	2.56

Listed Schools of Transfer:

San Diego State	4
U.C.R.	52
Undecided	6
La Sierra College	2
Los Angeles State	4
Orange State	6
San Bernardino State	1
Long Beach State	1
California Baptist	1
U.C.L.A.	1
University of Redlands	1
Davis, University of California	1
San Jose State	1
	81

Listed Majors:

Nursing 2 year professional	62	Mathematics	2
Major undecided	41	Music	2
Cosmetology	32	Clerical	2
Teaching: Elementary	17	Veterinary Science	2
English	11	Home Economics (2 year)	1
Sociology or Social Work	11	Drama	1
Psychology	10	Chemistry	1
Nursing 4 year R.N. & B.S.	8	Anthropology	
Nursing, vocational	8	Law Enforcement	1
Business: General	7	Physiology	
Business: Secretarial	7	Music (2 year program)	1
Foreign Language	4	Political Science	1
Art	4	Accounting	1
Business Administration	4	Zoology	1
Library Science	3	Bacteriology	1
Physical Education	3	Biology	1
General Education	3	Osteopathy	1
Art, Commercial	-	Theology	1
Liberal Arts	3	Philosophy	1
Teaching: Secondary	3	Pharmacy	1
Speech	2	Home Economics	1
History	2	Political Science or Public Ad.	1

APPENDIX B

In a recent survey of women students at Riverside City College we found that of the 825 women attending day school this semester, 277 were either married or 25 years or over. This is not only a sizable group but an interesting one which we feel merits special attention and study.

The questionnaire, which we are asking you to complete and return in the enclosed stamped envelope by May 1, has been designed to provide us with additional information concerning the characteristics and problems of mature women at Riverside City College. We prefer that you do not sign your name to the questionnaire.

It is exciting to know that so many of you are attending the junior college. With your help we can perhaps do a better job of serving you and future women students.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Phyllis Sensor
Advisor to Women Students

PS/cd

RIVERSIDE CITY COLLEGE
Student Survey - Women Students Over 25 or Married
Spring, 1964

Questionnaire

1. Date of Birth _____

2. Marital Status: Married ____ Single ____ Separated ____ Divorced ____

3. How many children do you have? _____

   b. What are the ages of your children? _____

4. How have you solved the baby-sitting problem?

5. What did you do immediately after high school?

   b. Did you plan at that time to continue your education? Yes ___ No ___

   c. What made you decide to attend college?

6. What are your reasons for returning to school?

7. What is your family's reaction to your going to college?

8. What problems have you encountered as a result of your return to school?

   a. Family problems:

   b. Personal problems:

   c. Financial problems:

9. How many semesters have you completed to date? _____

10. Do you plan to complete the requirements for the A.A. degree? Yes___ No___

11. Do you plan to get a B.A. or B.S. degree? Yes___ No___

12. Do you plan to go on for the M.A.? Yes___ No___

13. How do you plan to finance your education?

14. What specific problems have you encountered as a college student?

   a. Study problems:

   b. Scheduling (do you find enough courses offered at appropriate time?)

   c. Relationships with other students:

d. Time planning:

e. Competition with younger students:

f. Course requirements:

g. Other (please specify)

15. What have been your greatest satisfactions since entering college?

16. How has college helped you?

17. In what ways could the college be of more help to you?

18. How do you plan to apply your college education?

19. Do you feel it advisable for women to go to college directly from high school? Explain.

20. Additional comments: (please feel free to comment in any way you wish about your college experience).

APPENDIX C

SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF A QUESTIONNAIRE
SPRING SEMESTER, 1964, TO 96 MATURE WOMEN* STUDENTS OF
RIVERSIDE CITY COLLEGE

Number enrolled: 277
Questionnaires sent: 96
Questionnaires returned: 52 (54%)

1. Age of Respondents

under 25:	10 (20%)
26-35:	17 (32%)
36-45:	14 (27%)
over 45:	11 (21%)

2. Marital Status of Respondents

Married:	41 (80%)
Single:	0
Separated:	3 (6%)
Divorced:	5 (10%)
Widowed:	2 (4%)

3. Number and ages of children

	Number	Ages of Children					
		1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	over 25
None:	6 (11%)						
One:	13 (25%)	6	2	1	2	2	
Two:	14 (27%)	4	7	8	4	2	3
Three:	11 (21%)	5	10	7	6	1	4
Four:	4 (8%)	2	3	7	2	1	1
Five:	2 (4%)		2	3	3	2	
Six:	2 (4%)	2	4	4	2		

4. How have you solved the babysitting problem? (41)**

	Number	Percentage
School age children	14	34
Relatives	9	22
Hired Babysitter	7	18
No children or no problem	6	15
Nursery school	3	7
Neighbor	1	2
Unsatisfactory - still looking for a better solution	1	2

5. (a) What did you do immediately after high school? (51)

Attended college:	16	31
Worked:	16	31
Married:	13	26
Attended specialized school (Bus. Cosmetology, Nursing)	5	10
Care of father	1	2

(b) Did you plan at that time to continue your education?

Yes: 31 (60%)
No: 20 (40%)

* Women 25 years or older or married
** Number in parenthesis after each question indicates replies received

(c) What made you decide to attend college? (48)

Desire for further education	20	42%
Job training or career	19	40
To meet the challenge	6	12
Family suggestion	2	4
To fill leisure time	1	2

6. What are your reasons for returning to school? (47)

To train for employment or career	21	45%
To learn	8	17
To get a degree	8	17
To finish training begun earlier	6	13
To contribute to the improvement of mankind	2	4
For personal satisfaction	1	2
To bring education up to date	1	2

7. What is your family's reaction to your going to college? (51)

Enthusiastic and proud of Mother	27	53%
Favorable	13	25
Okay as long as household runs smoothly	7	14
Husband negative, children favorable	3	6
No reaction	1	2

8. (a) What family problems have you encountered as a result of your return to school? (44)

None	17	38%
Lack of time for household duties	15	34
Not enough time to be with family	7	16
Opposition from relatives (not immediate family)	3	7
Child care during illness of children	2	5

(b) What personal problems have you encountered as a result of your return to school? (40)

Pressure of study and home duties	15	37%
None	13	33
Health (tiring easily, etc.)	4	10
Loss of freedom	3	8
Learning how to study	2	5
Relative conflict	1	2
Difficulty in adjusting to college	1	2
Difficulty in adjusting to changed outlook	1	2

(c) What financial problems have you encountered as a result of your return to school?

None	33	69%
Tight squeeze on budget	7	15
Cost of babysitters	3	6
Part-time employment necessary	2	4
Cost of books	2	4
Transportation	1	2

9. How many semesters have you completed to date? (50)

None	6	12%
One	18	36
Two	7	14
Three	9	18
Four	6	12
Five	2	4
Six	1	2
Ten	1	2

10. Do you plan to complete the requirements for the A.A. Degree? (50)

Yes	29	58%	
No	16	32	(8 of these plan to get the B.A. or M.A.)
Undecided	5	10	

11. Do you plan to get the B.A. or B.S. Degree? (48)

Yes	22	46%
No	14	29
Undecided	11	23
Has B.A.	1	2

12. Do you plan to go on for the M.A.? (47)

Yes	9	19%
No	25	53
Undecided	12	26
Has M.A.	1	2

13. How do you plan to finance your education? (42)

Family income	20	48%
Working	9	21
Scholarship hopes or loans	7	16
Personal income	2	5
Savings	2	5
Support payments	2	5

14. (a) What specific study problems have you encountered as a college student? (48)

Finding enough time to study	29	61%
None	7	15
Learning how to study	4	8
Concentration	4	8
Ability to retain information	2	4
Inadequate place on campus for study	2	4

(b) What specific scheduling problems have you encountered as a college student? (Do you find enough courses offered at appropriate times, etc.) (47)

No problems	38	81%
Classes too spread out	5	11
Should be more 3 unit Tues.-Thur. classes	2	4
Summer session offerings should be increased	1	2
More Extended Day transer art courses	1	2

(c) What specific problems have you encountered in your relationships with other students? (46)

None	42	92%
Friendly but non-acceptance into younger groups	2	4
No time for pursuing relationships with other students	1	2
Younger students not congenial	1	2

(d) Time planning:

Problem	23	64%
No problem	13	36

(e) Competition with younger students (41)

No problem	33	80%
Problem	8	20

(f) Course requirements (32)

No problem	30	94%
Problem	2	6%

(g) Other problems (19)

None	8	42%	Instructor	2	10%
Health	2	10	Parking	1	5
Library facilities	2	10	Scheduling	1	5
			Other	3	16

15. What have been your greatest satisfactions since entering college? (52)

Stimulation of learning:	25	48%
Personal satisfaction:	20	38
New ideas and new interests:	4	8
Completion of vocational training:	3	6

16. How has college helped you? (45)

Expanded interests, broader outlook	19	42%
Developed mind	13	28
Gained self confidence	7	16
Personal satisfaction	3	7
Growth and maturity	3	7

17. In what ways could the college be of more help to you? (37)

None	14	37%
Additional counseling (aptitudes, vocational information, emotional problems)	8	21
Pre-school nursery facilities	3	8
Club for married women	3	8
Parking	2	5
Scheduling (more 1½ hr. classes)	2	5
Quiet place to study	2	5
More attention to students as individuals - not just numbers	1	3
Additional course work in specific areas (wig making)	1	3
Job placement	1	3

18. How do you plan to apply your college education? (47)

Vocation, career, job	39	83%
Enriched daily living	6	13
Church work, community activity	1	2
Undecided (art major)	1	2

19. Do you feel it advisable for women to go to college directly from high school? (49)

Yes	37	76%
No	9	18
Only if students are serious about wanting to learn	3	6

20. Additional comments (28)

Appreciation for what the college has done for them	24	85%
Instructor attitudes and comments disturbing	3	11
More counseling needed for the older woman	1	4